

# personnel matters

WINTER 2002

## IN THIS ISSUE...

New Year Brings Opportunities	2
Weighty Crisis is Avoidable	2
10 Ways to Keep Your Wellness Resolution	2
Retirement Investors Club Can Make Dreams Come True	3
Help is Near	3
New Resources	4
Success Depends on Putting the Right People Into Place	4
Successful Government Team Teaches Secrets of Success to Small Businesses	4
Electronic Tax Filing Brings Fast Return	4

## GOVERNOR'S GOLDEN DOME AWARDS 2002

Nominations are open through February 28 for Employee of the Year, Leader of the Year, Lt. Governor's Employee Volunteer, Badge of Courage and Team of the Year. For more information, go to <http://www.state.ia.us/government/idop/GoldenDomeAwards.htm>

## from the Office of the Governor and Lt. Governor

**EACH DAY LAST YEAR IN EVERY IOWA COUNTY**, state employees arrived at work, prepared to do jobs that presented challenges few can imagine. You fought for Iowans' rights and you righted many wrongs. You protected our youngest citizens and our oldest. You advocated for our state, our businesses, our environment, and our people. You helped preserve the Iowa way of life.

When revenues declined, you didn't wait for someone else to solve the problem. You identified ways to streamline services. You found ways to simplify our processes and restructure our organizations. You sacrificed wage increases so that budget cuts didn't go any deeper.

At the same time you were facing challenges here, you found ways to help the victims in New York City and Washington, D.C. Some of you were called to active duty and others supported those who were.

We are fortunate to live in Iowa. We have strong financial ratings, over \$400 million in the Rainy Day Fund, and plans to stimulate our economy. We are working together to make sure that Iowans are safe and secure, that our children are well educated, that our elderly citizens and those with disabilities receive the care they need, and that we continue to encourage economic development and create quality job opportunities.

We know how difficult a year 2001 was for all state employees. We still have budget challenges ahead, but with the hard work of dedicated Iowans and state workers, together we will make the decisions necessary to preserve and maintain government services.



Thank you for what you accomplished in 2001 and for maintaining your commitment to the people of Iowa. May this new year bring peace, prosperity, and pride in public service.

Governor Tom Vilsack  
Lt. Governor Sally Pederson

# New Year brings Opportunities

by Mollie Anderson



**WHAT A YEAR IT WAS!** In 2001 you saw valuable employees plan to leave under the Early Out program, established to reduce the number of layoffs that were required to balance the budget. In spite of that, some of your coworkers were laid off. You may have had to adjust to a reorganized department or take on new duties. What do you do now?

While no one can predict the future, there are some things we know for sure.

We know we are better prepared because of actions taken in 2001. These actions weren't easy, but they were necessary for departments to continue providing essential services and be in a position to respond to additional revenue changes.

We know state employees care about what they do and the people they serve. You handled tough professional challenges over the past year and you handled them well. You will face new

challenges with creativity and commitment.

We know we must look to the future. We are working with departments to plan how to replace the knowledge and skills of those leaving and develop the workforce necessary to meet future needs.

State government is changing. And with the changes come opportunities – for you to learn new skills or take on new responsibilities, find ways to streamline operations, and discover other improvements in the way we deliver services.

At the Department of Personnel, we will be looking for opportunities to improve our services in the proposed Department of Administrative Services, which consolidates us with General Services, Information Technology, some areas of Revenue and Finance, and the ICN. With a customer service mission in the new department, the consolidation is an opportunity for us to renew our commitment to you.

Working together, we can turn any challenges that come our way in 2002 into opportunities. □

## 10 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR WELLNESS RESOLUTIONS

1. Build new habits instead of fighting the old ones.
2. Are you task oriented? Write down your goals. Studies show a greater rate of success for those that do.
3. A bit more of a free spirit? Think of exercise as recess.
4. Follow the Theory of Relativity: "A body in motion tends to stay in motion." Get up and walk a short distance. You are more likely to keep going.
5. Tell family, friends or coworkers your plans. Peer pressure works.
6. Make physical activity a priority by scheduling it into your day and find small ways to move more. Park farther away. Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
7. Prepare menus for the week and you'll be less tempted by junk food when buying groceries.
8. Brown bag healthy food to work and you will be less tempted by fast food.
9. Find a buddy to help keep you motivated.
10. Subscribe to FITNET, a daily motivational e-mail from the Department of Public Health, by e-mailing Tim Lane at [TLANE@health.state.ia.us](mailto:TLANE@health.state.ia.us). □

## weighty crisis is avoidable

**TIM LANE SEES A CRISIS COMING TO IOWA AND HE'S CONFIDENT THAT STATE EMPLOYEES CAN HELP STOP IT.**



Tim Lane  
Dept of Public Health

Iowa will become an increasingly risky place to live due to our sedentary lifestyle and poor eating habits—unless we act to prevent it. Nationwide, the rate of obesity is rising and Iowa is now eighth in the percentage of people who are overweight. Lane said that we are heading for a crisis because sedentary lifestyles and poor eating habits make us sick.

"These will soon be the leading cause of preventable deaths and diseases," stated Lane. "Fortunately, it's not that hard to do something about it," he added. "Twenty minutes of moderate activity and five servings of fruits and vegetables each day can make a tremendous difference."

Lane agrees that while the solution is simple, statistics confirm that finding the motivation to change is not so easy. Officials from the Centers for Disease Control and Iowa Department of Public Health report that over 33% of adults are overweight and 60% do not get enough physical activity.

Lane suggested that one way to motivate yourself is to ask why you bother to plan financially for your future if you won't be in any shape to carry out your plans.

"What do you want to do when you retire? Do you want to travel, play golf, or spend time with your children and grandchildren?" asked Lane. "Our bodies are either building ability or atrophying so if you want to be active tomorrow, you must be active today." □

# Retirement Investors' Club can make dreams come true



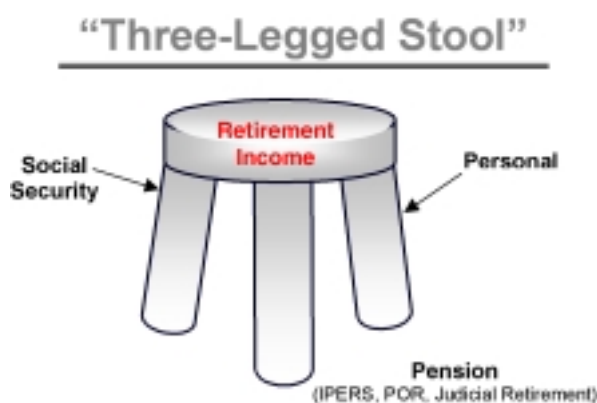
The Retirement Investors' Club can help you save the money you need to turn your dreams for retirement into reality.

"The Retirement Investors' Club is the new name for the deferred compensation program," explained plan administrator Jenny Dixon.

The new name highlights the importance of building personal savings for retirement. Personal savings is one leg of a three-legged stool that represents how you will finance your retirement. Social Security and your pension plan create two legs of your stool. But the stool will not stand without the third leg of personal savings.

"As a member of the Retirement Investors' Club, you build personal savings to supplement your pension and social security benefits," stated Investors' Club Educator Robbie Stoecker.

Dixon and Stoecker stressed that although the name changed, their mission remains the same – to help you save for retirement. □



As a member of the Retirement Investors' Club, you can reduce your current income taxes and defer taxes on your investment earnings until retirement. You can enroll at any time if you work 20 or more hours per week or have a fixed annual salary. Your contribution can be as little as \$12.50 per paycheck. If you are eligible, your employer matches 50% of your contribution, up to a maximum match of \$15 a month for Judicial Branch employees and \$25 a month for Executive and Legislative Branch employees.\*

Four investment providers were selected through a competitive bidding process to serve you. The four make available numerous options ranging from conservative to aggressive investments through well-known fund managers such as Fidelity, Janus, Putnam, AIM, Franklin, and American Century.

If you continue to contribute to a provider other than the four below, compare the benefits of service, fund selection, low fees, and payment options available to you if you transfer to one of these four.

**For more information visit**  
<http://www.state.ia.us/idop/BenDefComp.htm> □

\* Employees covered by the United Electrical/Iowa United Professionals (UE/IUP) contract are not eligible for the match. State Police Officers Council (SPOC) match eligibility begins 01/01/03. The deferred compensation program is not available to employees of Regents institutions.

## NEW ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION LIMITS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2002

Year	Regular Limits The lesser of 100% of net income or:	3-Year Catch-Up <sup>1</sup> Limits The lesser of twice the regular limit or the total of the regular limit plus amount of missed contributions:	50+ Catch-Up <sup>2</sup> Limits For participants age 50 or older, the regular limit may be increased by:
2002	\$ 11,000	\$ 22,000	\$1,000
2003	\$ 12,000	\$ 24,000	\$2,000
2004	\$ 13,000	\$ 26,000	\$3,000
2005	\$ 14,000	\$ 28,000	\$4,000
2006	\$ 15,000	\$ 30,000	\$5,000
After 2006	Indexed in \$500 increments	Indexed in \$500 increments	Indexed in \$500 increments

1. 50+ Catch-Up cannot be used at the same time as the 3-Year Catch-Up  
 2. 403(b) regular Catch-Up limits will not change; 50+ Catch-Up is available

## HELP IS NEAR

If change and uncertainty are getting you down, get the help you need.

- Your own department has a personnel assistant who can help you get information or services you need. If you aren't sure who this person is, ask your supervisor.
- A wide variety of information, from employee benefits to jobs, is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at [www.state.ia.us/idop](http://www.state.ia.us/idop)
- Call the EAP if you need help handling work or personal problems. Counselors work for an independent, private agency and provide confidential assistance.  
**515-244-6090 (Des Moines)**  
**1-800-EAP-IOWA**  
**1-800-327-3020**
- Outplacement assistance is available for anyone who is laid off. Call 515-281-6294.

## INVESTMENT PROVIDERS

**ING AETNA** 800-814-1643 x 3749  
<http://aetnafinancial.com/index.shtml>

**EQUITABLE** 877-800-7279  
<http://www.equitable.com/iowa/>

**THE HARTFORD** 800-424-2825 x 47627  
<http://retire.hartfordlife.com/>

**VALIC** 800-892-5558 x 88700  
<http://www.valic.com/vrs>

## NEW RESOURCES

### Take advantage of online applications

Applying for another state job will soon be faster and easier when online applications become available.

"Within the next few months you will be able to apply for state jobs simply by visiting our Web site at [www.state.ia.us/idop](http://www.state.ia.us/idop)," said Mary Ann Hills, Employment Supervisor for the Department of Personnel. "Besides being convenient for applicants, it will save money by reducing the need to process paper."

Applicants will be able to continue using mail, fax, and e-mail.

### Information on dental insurance at your fingertips

You can now get information about your Delta Dental Insurance eligibility, plan coverage, and the status of claims at [www.deltadentalia.com](http://www.deltadentalia.com). Be ready to enter your identification number (found on your Delta Dental ID Card), last name, and birth date to access your account information. If you have any questions, call a Delta Dental Customer Service Representative at 800-544-0718.

### Grant increases accessibility of job information

People with visual impairments can more easily browse for a state job thanks to a grant from the Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council. A computer that reads what is on the screen is now available for use in the IDOP central office in Des Moines. A laptop with the same adaptive equipment is available for use at job fairs, in high schools and colleges, or at other locations where recruitment takes place. Thanks, Council, for your support!

## SUCCESS DEPENDS ON PUTTING THE RIGHT PEOPLE INTO PLACE WEB-BASED TOOLS CAN HELP

Customer service administrator Nancy Berggren, a twenty-five year veteran of human resource management, knows that getting the right employees, in the right places, at the right time, is essential to the successful delivery of public services. Berggren and a Department of Personnel team are working to get tools in the hands of state managers that will help them create a workforce that can meet current and future needs.

"Workforce planning is one of the most critical tasks performed by managers," stated Barbara Kroon, a human resource specialist and a leading project team member. "This is especially true now that reorganizations, layoffs and the Early Out Incentive Program are having an impact on state government's workforce."

New Web-based tools will provide immediate help and guidance for longer term planning. Among the new tools available are checklists and templates to help decide how to staff restructured organizations and how to identify what it will take for employees to do restructured jobs. Answers to frequently asked questions and links to resources will also be provided.

These tools will be available later by the end of February at [www.state.ia.us/idop](http://www.state.ia.us/idop). Contact Barb Kroon at 515-281-6388 or [barbara.kroon@idop.state.ia.us](mailto:barbara.kroon@idop.state.ia.us) for more information about the workforce planning tools. □

## SUCCESSFUL GOVERNMENT TEAM TEACHES SECRETS OF SUCCESS TO SMALL BUSINESSES

Four departments are demonstrating successful teamwork as they teach targeted small businesses how to do business with the state.

The Departments of Economic Development, General Services, Inspections and Appeals, and Personnel joined forces to produce seminars on what it takes for targeted small businesses to sell goods and services to the state. Targeted small businesses are small businesses owned by a female, a minority person or a person with a disability.

Targeted small businesses learn what and how goods and services are purchased by agencies. The businesses also receive marketing information.

Seminars were first held in 2001 and continue this year. For more information contact Lois Schmitz at 515-281-6383 or [lois.schmitz@idop.state.ia.us](mailto:lois.schmitz@idop.state.ia.us). □

## ELECTRONIC TAX FILING BRINGS FAST RETURN

Electronically file your tax returns and get your refund in about two weeks, versus twelve weeks using the old paper method. You can also have your refund directly deposited. For more information go to [www.state.ia.us/tax](http://www.state.ia.us/tax), call 515-281-3114 or 800-367-3388, or e-mail the Department of Revenue and Finance at [idr@idrf.state.ia.us](mailto:idr@idrf.state.ia.us). □

*Personnel Matters* is published quarterly for Executive Branch employees. Some editions are sent to employees in other branches of government when the content affects them. The newsletter is also available at [www.state.ia.us/idop](http://www.state.ia.us/idop).

For an alternative format contact Julie Economaki at the numbers below.



EDITOR: Julie Economaki PHONE: 515-281-4742 FAX: 515-242-6450

E-MAIL: [julie.economaki@idop.state.ia.us](mailto:julie.economaki@idop.state.ia.us)

CONTRIBUTING WRITER: Mindy Dorrell

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL: Grimes State Office Building,  
400 East 14th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0150